

# THE MUSICAL MAGAZINE.

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## PRACTICAL.

### VOCAL EXECUTION.

THE next topic before us, is that branch of practical adaptation which consists in the application of music to sacred words. This subject is not without its difficulties; and to some extent there will be honest differences of opinion respecting it. In secular music, where fashion is every thing, and sentiment, at best, a subordinate consideration, the greatest latitude of views is entertained. So far as our *own* country is concerned, the second-rate vocalists of Europe, in the wane of their popularity at home, visit our shores as first-rate executants, who, while they take unbounded liberties with the art in paying court to an unpracticed American auditory, are yet formed for the time being, to give tone to the public taste. Their very vices of style, and their unprincipled methods of adaptation, will scarcely be questioned so long as the individuals continue in favor. The various classes of musicians who thus visit us, while they inculcate endless diversities of taste, all agree in one single thing. They labor for the greatest amount of money, and must therefore do their utmost to interest us with the appearance of special talent, whether genuine or false. And as to their influence—who among us dares to question their merits, or bring their performances to the full test of enlightened criticism? The result is, our country is filled with songs which, for the most part, have no other merit than that of having been sung by some great vocalist with “great applause.” The songs are applied, sometimes to the Italian language, sometimes to the French, sometimes to the English. But it is all the same thing: the subjects are trivial and often subversive of sound principles in refinement and morals. As to national ballads we have none. The only channels through which songs of a secular character can become extensively popular, at the present time, are the Opera, the Theatre, and the

Circus. To such persons as will not visit these places of amusement, the secular concert subserves a similar object. The selections even there, are of the same school, tending to the same result.

If from the secular, we turn to the sacred department of music, we are furnished at once with a foundation for consistent principles, which are as irresistible as the principles of our nature. In sacred music, the *themes* of song have claims which no one can presume to violate, and be innocent. Talk as much as we will of style and manner, of science, invention, refinement and cultivation; still, unless the chosen themes are really honored, illustrated or enforced, by the eloquence of song, the music to say the least, is impertinent and inappropriate. From such a decision there is no appeal. The test to be applied is absolutely infallible. Eloquence which can be felt only by the speaker is not eloquence to any moral purpose; and the powers of music which extend not beyond the musician, are equally unavailing. If a speaker's manner is such as to convey wrong impressions of his subject, and awaken irrelevant and improper emotions, he is still more censurable. Let his learning or cultivation or refinement be never so great, we shall acknowledge his eloquence, only in proportion as his manner and matter are calculated on the whole to produce required results. This rule, however severe in its application to the musician it may seem, is nevertheless to be regarded as a fundamental axiom, from which there is no just appeal. The most eloquent of men, we know when placed in circumstances which are unfavorable, will sometimes fail, and so it is with the musician. But both are equally bound to conform as far as may be to the exigencies in which they are placed. They are to aim at legitimate results, and not to rest satisfied without attaining them.

But here, some persons are ready to interpose an objection, drawn from the consideration that music is a fine art. In painting, in poetry, and architecture, they say, the artist is not bound to have the least reference to popular influence. He works for posterity, and for the benefit of the initiated few of his own times. This is the ground extensively taken by musicians at the present day. They are in the right, and all the people, a few amateurs excepted, are in the wrong. The music they produce, or select and apply to sacred themes is of a high character. The public ought to admire it: and the musician is not to conform to their stupidity.

And suppose we here grant the musician his own chosen premises? He labors only for the benefit of posterity. Very well: let his works be laid aside till posterity are ready to appreciate them. He brings out

some fine pieces for the purpose of gratifying the initiated few : then let the few only, be invited to enjoy them. Even here, so long as the themes are sacred, he is bound to calculate on results that are in strait accordance with the fundamental principle laid down. The themes must be duly honored, illustrated and enforced. He who adapts music to sacred themes for the benefit of posterity, must accommodate himself to the circumstances of posterity : and he who labors for the favored few around him, must look well to it, that he ministers to the right sources of gratification.

But are the above premises strictly correct ? Is there no *moral* difference between the claims of sacred music, and those that relate to the sister arts ? Music is a divinely constituted medium of sacred praise. It belongs as appropriately to our religious assemblies and our domestic altars as prayer itself. He who leads in prayer is bound to be at once fervent, intelligible and appropriate. And what should we think of the views of a man who would be inditing or compiling prayers, merely for the benefit of posterity ? David and Solomon and Asaph and Heman and Isaiah and Habakuk, and the beloved disciple who reclined upon the Saviour's bosom, wrote psalms and spiritual songs for posterity down to the remotest ages of time, under the guidance of infallible direction : but they failed not to adapt themselves primarily to the circumstances of their own times. They counted on immediate results as well as legitimate influences. They wrote for the many, and not chiefly for the favored few whose minds had become refined into fastidiousness. They aimed at real eloquence which should be operative on the multitude of their cotemporaries, no less than upon future generations. The same themes substantially are still in use. Music claims also to be the soul of eloquence. Its constituted purposes hang upon the true spirit of the themes. It is something superadded to the themes for the purpose of improving them ; and just in proportion to their intrinsic importance, is the necessity of adhering to the fundamental principle we are advocating.

Here, then, is an established axiom which is as important as the art itself. The sacred themes which the musician chooses as the subjects of musical adaptation, must always be treated in such a manner as is calculated to heighten their interest strictly in accordance with their religious character.

The Bible, let it be remembered, is a book that looses none of its interest by being familiar to our acquaintance. The more we study it with proper motives and feelings, the more it pleases us ; and in the

way it will gain upon us continually till the end of time. Its treasures are inexhaustible. What is true of the whole is true of its various parts. Its precepts, its promises, its examples, and illustrations and motives, all rise in importance in our apprehension as we travel onward in the heavenly road. So with the themes of sacred song. When properly treated, they interest us continually, more and more as they meet our eyes, dwell upon our lips and become the objects of devout contemplation. Here, then, we are furnished with an infallible criterion. If the themes adapted to music lose their peculiar interest by being frequently sung; if a sense of their preciousness does not actually increase, then we may know that there is something wrong either in the adaptation or performance. A man's individual case may not perhaps be a sufficient guide for others: the decision turns upon the influence with community at large. Do the texts of scripture which the great masters have set to music with so much appearance of success, after all, produce the required influences to which we allude? Do the multitude who admire music, as they catch the "honied accents" which fall from the lips of the professional singer, realize the same preciousness of the themes as at other times and in other circumstances? We ask not whether the imagination is set on fire, but whether the heart is touched as by the secret springs of divine influence. Through a mere heated imagination the sensible emotions will sometimes kindle, and the heart seems to melt: but we ask for impressions which are also durable. Do the themes as treated by the musician continue to grow upon us day after day, month after month and year after year? Or do they on the other hand produce the opposite influence, bringing associations of weariness and lassitude in connexion with the reading of the scripture passages in question? If we do not read those themes in the Bible which are so often rehearsed in song, with ever increasing interest, then it is clear that the song is in fault. There is either a bad adaptation or a wrong style of performance. If the music is too refined or too elaborate for the public ear, or too difficult for the talent of the performers, then there is an improper adaptation with reference to these circumstances: and if under the advantage of appropriate execution, the music does not make us who love the Bible, read the given themes in the sacred volume with increasing interest, then the application of the musical strains is fundamentally wrong, and to be regarded so, though they should have been composed by the greatest masters that ever lived.

We can think of but one circumstance which tends at all to modify

this decision. Christians so extensively neglect the praises of God in this country, that it becomes difficult to make suitable impressions upon them, even by music which is intrinsically good. In reference to this matter the churches verily are in fault. Still if a good impression can be made, then it ought to be : and that music and that style of performance which are best suited to this end, are alone to be regarded as really appropriate.

This subject is not generally understood as it should be. The principles here laid down will be found sufficiently severe in their application to the grand performances and masterly specimens of sacred music which are so extensively admired. But they are fundamental principles that must ultimately prevail. In our next we shall endeavor to illustrate them by critical examples.

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### PATENT NOTES.

THE question has often been asked why the lozenge shaped characters called patten notes, are not regarded as an improvement in musical notation, so far especially, as sacred music is concerned. Most persons it is alleged, do not succeed in learning to read music, where the common characters are used, while the process is found comparatively easy, when the lozenge shapes are introduced. The shapes fix the names of the notes, and the names it is thought, bring the sounds to mind with sufficient accuracy.

Intelligent teachers of *vocal* music are agreed in discarding the latter system : but when its friends demand reasons for this united opposition, the reasons given are not often satisfactory, because they presuppose more knowledge of musical theory than falls to the lot of those who have paid but little attention to the subject

There are some reasons, however, which lie within the compass of common observation ; and these it may be well to lay before our readers.

1. The characters in question are very inconvenient for the purposes of writing. Musical copyists would be as much perplexed with the lozenge shapes, as business men would be, if required to make use of the ancient black letter characters in their writings. This to any unprejudiced mind would be regarded as an important consideration.

2. The shapes while they create embarrassment to those who copy

music, are of no manner of use, except to novices in the art of singing. Instruments would never derive the smallest advantage from them: but would only meet with varieties of shapes with any meaning. This would create embarrassment, at least to some extent. The simplicity of characters is a principle of great practical advantage.

3. The lozenge characters are not a new invention. They were tried centuries ago for purposes similar to those of the present plan, and found unsatisfactory. Experience has decided in favor of round notes. Experience is certainly better than theory.

4. All the civilized nations are agreed on adopting the round characters; and a few uneducated men in America, will not succeed in effecting a change. This is evident both from the history and the present state of the art. Who could persuade the accomplished arithmetician to relinquish the nine digits in favor of Roman capitals?

5. But there is another reason which to those who can duly appreciate it, must set the matter entirely at rest. Those who are instructed on the patent note system, will invariably have a bad intonation. Individual exceptions may perhaps arise, but the remark as a general one, has all the certainty of a fixed rule. The reason why this should be so is quite obvious to the scientific vocalist, however obscure it may seem to others.

The use of syllables to the pupil in vocal music, is to bring sounds to mind by the power of association. The voice in singing passes through the various portions of a given scale, either by regular degrees, as from one sound to another which stands next in the ascending or descending series, or it proceeds by skips, as from the first immediate to the third or fourth, or from the second to the sixth or seventh, &c. In the former case, the relative situation of notes gives sufficient indication of names and pitches, as in the tune Dukestreet (sometimes called Newry) where the tune commences with the entire ascending scale, with the omission of the second degree, and then proceeds nearly half way down with the descending series. Shapes applied to such a passage could not make it, on the whole, any plainer than it is without them. But in the latter case, i. e. when the music proceeds by skips, the shapes are intended to save the pupil the labor of calculation. This is the very purpose for which they are intended. They save the labor of calculation, and enable the novice at a single glance it should seem to gain any distance required. But what if the labor thus proposed to be set aside, is the very thing required to make accurate performers? What if this special labor is indispensable to the discipline of vocal



talent? This is a consideration which in our own mind outweighs every other; and in urging it upon our readers it is needless to remind them that we speak the language of personal experience and observation, having been for these thirty years past more or less actively employed in the labor of cultivation.

It has been urged by the friends of the patent note system, that the skips may be learned by rote just as any one commits a tune to memory; and that a little practice upon the shapes and corresponding syllables will serve to bring the required skips to mind. The syllables *faw, law, sol; faw, law, faw; do, mi, sol, &c.* for instance, bring to mind in this way the intervals of the common chord, as *C, E, G; F, A, C; G, B, D, &c.* in the key of *C* major. There is some plausibility in the statement; but again we say, experience is better than theoretical speculation. The simple fact is, that almost the entire community of vocalists are in the habit of singing many of the skips quite out of tune; and the only adequate method of improvement is, to practice the intermediate sounds. For example; let it be required for an ordinary singer, to pass by skips downward from the octave, to the third and to the fourth of the scale alternately; and he will sound both of the lower intervals out of tune as a matter of course. He will be like the half-tutored school boy who guesses at a word without a consideration of all the letters contained in it. But let the same singer have time to make his regular descent by the intervals of the scale till he reaches the place of the skips required, and thus ascertain the pitch; he is then prepared to sing them in tune, precisely as a school boy may learn to pronounce a word, after he has spelled it. This habit of measuring the skips is indispensable to the vocalist who would learn to sing by mere inspection of the notes. The process is at first slow, but it quickens by degrees, till at length the intermediate sounds forming the skips come to pass through the mind with the same rapidity in which letters of the alphabet pass in the exercise of reading. At first, the voice tries every interval, as if all the degrees intervening between the skips, were actually written down upon the staff; but in process of time, the intervals come to be contemplated by the mind as the letters are which compose the words of a well-known language.

Philosophers tell us, particularly those of the modern school, that in the most rapid reading the mind actually notices every letter in every word of the language before us: and that in the quickest passages of instrumental execution, every variety in the notation and every touch of every finger of each hand, employ separate volitions of the mind;

and that the power of habit in some sense supercedes the full consciousness of the fact. However this may be, in the accomplished reader, or executant; it is true of the entire novice. He must individualize every thing in the early stages of cultivation, if he would make fair advances in practical skill. This is a fixed principle which nothing can overthrow. There is no royal road to eminence in which the traveller gets onward without the regular progressive steps. On every other principle the seeming facilities are to be regarded as ultimate hindrances. If people would acquire the art of which we speak, they must be willing to bestow some labor upon the subject. After all, the difficulties in the round note system have been unduly magnified. This we hope to exemplify in a future number.

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## THEORETICAL.

### MODULATION.

Our next topic is that of Modulation. Some general notion of this subject may well be presupposed in reference to the readers of the scientific portions of the Magazine: yet it seems proper to bestow a few paragraphs upon it, for the benefit of those who may need information.

Both harmony and melody, it will be recollected, are formed from the intervals of the regular scales. The first note of a scale as well as its octave, double octave, &c., is called a key note. We have seen also that a fundamental base by fifths, leading from F, C, and G natural to D natural, produces at the root last mentioned, the interval of F sharp, as the major third to D natural. Now let F natural be relinquished in this fundamental series of fifths, and the fifths C, G and D natural will give us a scale in the key of G, commencing at the distance of one-fifth higher than before, but in all respects similar (so far as the successions of tones and semi-tones affect the ear) to the original scale commencing with C natural. The new scale will stand thus: G, A, B, C, D, E, F $\sharp$ , G. If again we strike off the lowest fifth of the fundamental series and add A natural, as a fundamental in connexion with G and D, (A carrying C sharp as its harmonic) then the fundamentals G, D, A, will give us a scale commencing with the tonic D, similar to the foregoing ones—making the degrees D, E, F $\sharp$  G, A,



**C ♯.** Proceeding in this way, every new fundamental we add to the series (relinquishing the lowest one at the same moment) will require its sharp third, by which means we obtain the intervals G, ♯ D, ♯ A, ♯, &c., as the respective sevenths or leading notes of the corresponding scales. See the articles in volume first which explain the origin and nature of scales. The sharps thus added will stand respectively at the distance of fifths from each other; and the same will be true of the corresponding keys. Let the scales, as above described, be written out in full, and it will be seen that in passing from one major scale to another, which is nearest related, the fourth interval of the one scale is uniformly sharpened so as to form the seventh of the other. Thus, F natural is the fourth interval in the scale commencing with C; but F, when sharpened, becomes the seventh in that which commences with G—C natural is the fourth in the key of G, but C ♯ is the seventh in the key of D, &c. In the way here described, we may proceed till all the letters have been sharpened, and in extreme cases, till F has been sharpened the second time.

But let us now invert this process by the use of the natural. The plan is, to add a fundamental fifth below the subdominant and relinquish the highest fifth or dominant, which note no longer requires its major third. In this backward process, we simply place a natural upon the several leading notes or sevenths of the scales, which notes become fourths in the same relations, as before the corresponding sharps were added. In the signature of five sharps, for example, if we place a natural upon A, the key changes from B major to E major; if we next place a natural upon D, the key changes from E major to A major. By placing a natural upon G in like manner, we return to D major; removing C sharp, we return to G major; and removing F ♯, we return to C major, the place whence we first started in the process of modulation.

In all this backward process, as before intimated, we simply reduce the sevenths of the several scales a semitone lower, by which they become fourths in another relation.

But when we have removed F ♯, the last in the series, the natural has no further use. We continue to modulate in the same direction by the use of flats. B, it will be recollected, is the seventh note of the scale commencing with C major. Place a flat upon this seventh, and it will become the fourth of a scale commencing upon F major. The seventh of the scale of F major is E: place a flat upon E, and it will become the fourth of a scale commencing upon B flat major. In the same manner we may proceed, flattening sevenths to convert them into

fourths, till all the letters have been flatted, and in some cases even till we flat B the second time.

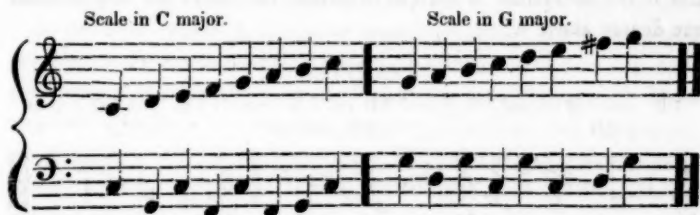
In the use then of sharps, naturals, and flats, as above described, we divide the whole octave into semitones, each of which in its turn may become a key to a major scale, whose intervals are substantially like those of C major. In the above illustration we commenced our course with sharps and returned by naturals: and proceeded still farther in the same direction by flats: but we might with equal ease have commenced our downwards course by flats and returned by naturals till the last flat was removed, and then proceeded with the series of sharps. The result would have been the same.

Hitherto we have considered only the modulations of the major scale. Each of these scales, without any change of signature, admits of a change to its relative minor two degrees lower, as from C major to A minor, from G major to E minor, from D major to B minor, &c. In the case of such changes, the sixth and seventh of the ascending minor must, of course, be elevated by appropriate accidentals, such as F and G sharp in the scale of A minor; C and D sharp in the scale of E minor, &c. These accidentals do not occur in a regular manner as fifths from each other, according to the fundamental arrangements above described; and for this reason they are made to form no part of the signature.

The above is a brief outline of the system of modulation. An air which is composed in a certain key, whether major or minor, may be written in any other key of a corresponding character. By this change of position it is simply transposed: it is only when the movement within itself occupies different scales passing from one to another, that modulation takes place.

It will also be borne in mind, that each scale is derived from three fundamental fifths, the sub-dominant, the tonic, and the dominant; and that in the process of modulation the fifths, as they pass onward, exchange characters. In the upward progression from C natural, for example, when F is relinquished below, and D added above, C, the original tonic, assumes the character of subdominant, G that of tonic, and D with its shaped third, that of dominant. Accordingly in the second step of this progression, by relinquishing C as the lowest fifth, G assumes its character as sub-dominant, D becomes tonic and A dominant. All this will be plain, if the reader, recollecting what we formerly said of the origin of scales, will take the trouble of writing out the present descriptions in their proper order, commencing with C natural, placing the fun-

damental notes in a staff beneath, as in the following examples in the keys of C and G major:

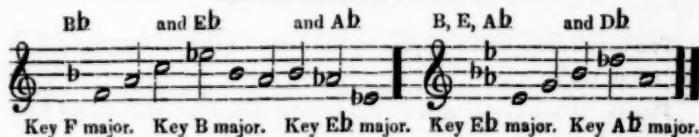


A perfect knowledge of modulation will not be acquired till the reader makes further advances in the science of harmony. A few rules and illustrations, however, may here with propriety be subjoined, and in presenting them, we shall simply repeat what we have said in another work for a similar purpose.

*First.* When accidentals occur, the first inquiry is, whether they form regular additions to the signature. When this is the case, the key may be found, as in transpositions.

### EXAMPLES.\*

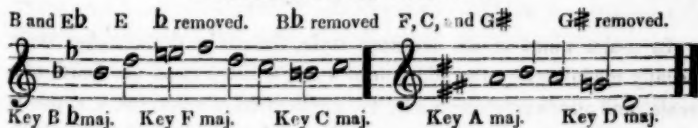
#### MODULATION BY FLATS.



#### MODULATION BY SHARPS.



#### MODULATION BY NATURALS.

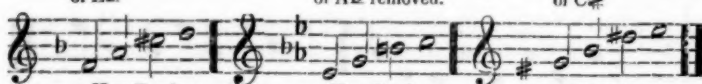


\* The Semibreves represent the keys.

*Second.* But if any accidental occurs which cannot be considered as belonging to the signature, it may be known that the scale is minor; and if the accidental is such as to *elevate* the voice, the key is found one degree above it.

## EXAMPLES.

B $\flat$  and C $\sharp$  instead of E $\flat$       B, E, and A $\flat$  and B $\sharp$  instead of A $\flat$  removed.      F $\sharp$  and D $\sharp$  instead of C $\sharp$

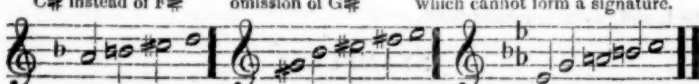


Key D minor.      Key C minor.      Key E minor.

*Third.* When two adjoining letters, such as B C, C D, A B, are elevated by accidentals, the scale is minor, and the key is situated one degree above the highest of the two letters.

## EXAMPLES.

B $\flat$  & B $\sharp$  followed by C $\sharp$  instead of F $\sharp$       Irregular from the omission of G $\sharp$       A $\flat$  & B $\flat$  removed while E $\flat$  is left, which cannot form a signature.



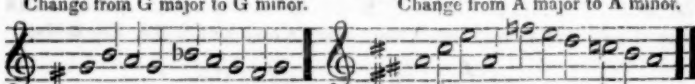
Key D minor.      Key E minor.      Key C minor.

The accidentals which appear in the last two staves are required in the minor scale.

*Fourth.* When accidentals that cannot be added to the signature have the effect of *depressing* notes, it may then be known that the *key* remains on the same letter, while the *scale* is changed from major to minor.

## EXAMPLES.

Change from G major to G minor.      Change from A major to A minor.



In psalm tunes of the ordinary style, the strain in the major scale usually modulates by the addition of a single sharp upon the fourth of a scale, and afterwards returns by the application of a natural, *i. e.* this is the process in the sharp signatures. In the flat signatures a corresponding effect is produced by a natural upon the fourth, which is afterwards removed by a re-insertion of the flat. A reference to any ordinary collection of music will furnish abundant examples of this nature. In

such cases, the original dominant becomes a temporary tonic, but afterwards resumes its former character. The change most frequently takes place near the middle of the stanza.

In the minor scale, a change of a corresponding nature sometimes takes place, by means of which, the original dominant becomes a temporary tonic, resuming its character before the close of the tune. More frequently, however, we proceed in modern days from the tonic minor to its relative major tonic. See the tune Windsor, as arranged in *Musica Sacra*, and Norwich in the Handel and Haydn Collection. Changes of this kind have a pleasant effect, and are becoming prevalent. For an example of the former character, see Bangor as found in the current publications.

As a general rule it may be observed, that a piece of music begins and closes in one and the same key. Sometimes we find a tune changing from minor to major without returning to its primitive arrangement. In short pieces this is hardly a safe experiment; unless there is an organ to superadd a symphony in the minor scale at the close of the hymn. The same may, with little abatement, be said of modulations to the dominant without returning. If the "land of notions" furnishes us some recent examples of this nature, under the sanction of respectable names and institutions, we still feel bound to adhere to sound and consistent principles. The practice, on the whole, is not defensible, and it cannot extensively prevail.

Short pieces, such as we have been describing, will occasionally admit of greater varieties in modulation; the principal key must, on the whole, predominate, and occupy the largest portion of the tune. The modulations are generally very transient.

With respect to anthems, motets, collects, choruses, and hymn tunes of an extended character, we observe much greater varieties of modulation. Even whole strains and movements may pass before a given change is relinquished, and the music returns to the principal key. Digressions of this nature may also succeed each other, to the great improvement of the composition. A long piece ought to be enriched by a variety of changes; and these, if well managed, have all the interest of well chosen digressions in an extended poem.

In the higher specimens of composition, changes are often sudden and great: nor is the regular order of the flat and sharp signatures always observed. But the above remarks must suffice for our present purpose. Exact rules cannot always be relied upon, even in plainer music. The attentive student must examine specimens, and derive principles from

the result. When modulations are well conducted, however, they give to a piece that indispensable quality, which in literary compositions is called unity of design. Let this hint be continually kept in view, and the pupil will learn to make suitable discriminations.

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## MISCELLANEOUS.

For the Musical Magazine.

### "WHERE ARE THE NINE?"

**MR. EDITOR:** There is, to my mind, a marked inconsistency in many professing Christians at the present day, of which they seem not to be aware. I allude to the great practical difference which is so extensively made, between the offices of prayer and praise. I have been led to believe that they are substantially the same. Both offices are instituted by the same authority; and both require expressions of the devout sentiments of the heart. The themes of prayer and of devotional song are equally solemn; except that the latter frequently imply a higher state of the affections than is usually witnessed in the former. Both, if Paul's views are correct, appertain alike to edification. Both refer to the spirit and the understanding. If prayer is the more appropriate office in affliction; praise is the special, I had almost said, the spontaneous, language of holy joy.

All this will generally be admitted in argument: and yet the majority of Christians while they think it a great sin to neglect prayer, think nothing of treating the whole subject of devotional praise with marked indifference and neglect. That the duty in question devolves upon some few individuals of a congregation is readily admitted. *They* no doubt ought to sing; and to take pains to learn to sing with decent propriety, or with as much taste and skill as they choose: but as for others, having any part at all to act in the matter, the idea seems not to enter their minds. Singing must be supported. Enough persons must be found who will do up the work rather decently; and the rest, of course, may be excused, thought they sing neither at the household altar or in the hours of secret worship.

The false plea of natural inability has been so long insisted upon for the last fifty years, as to lead to something not unlike a verification of



the principle involved. For those who, from any pretext whatever neglect to cherish and improve their voices will lose them for the time being. But the cases, even with this allowance, are not numerous when a person can safely bring the plea that he has no talent to improve in this way. Or, supposing the multitude had really lost the power of cultivation; their children have not lost it; and should therefore have the higher claims to instruction.

Why then is praise so extensively neglected and undervalued? Is it consistent to be always asking favors in the constituted way of asking, and at the same time to be withholding the constituted methods of thanksgiving and praise? Is there no fear of ingratitude in this matter? Ten have been cleansed, "where are the nine?" Can any one bring the whole offering that is due from the ten? Far be it from me to encourage promiscuous, uncultivated singing in our public assemblies. I mean no such inference, I simply wish to inquire how it is that ingratitude is a crime every where else except in withholding the constituted methods of praise to our Heavenly Father?

C. D. E.

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#### NEW YORK ACADEMY OF SACRED MUSIC.

This institution gave a few evenings ago in the Bleecker street church of this city, a public rehearsal, more interesting in its character if we mistake not, than any which had preceded it. Addresses were given on the occasion, by the Rev. Drs. Spring, and Patton, Mr. Rand, and Mr. Kirk. The latter had made special preparations for the occasion, and spoke at length on the devotional claims, advantages and influences of sacred music, and pointed out some of the prevailing abuses, with corresponding remedies; and urged upon a large portion of his hearers the importance of qualifying themselves to take an active part in the office of sacred music. The plea sometimes offered, that it is not respectable to sing the praises of God in public, was treated with very little ceremony. Intrinsically, it is an honor to be allowed to sing the praises of God. "If you think it is not respectable" said the speaker, "then make it so." Such a position in a city like this, where the power of influence is easily controlled, admits of no reply. It needs not a word of comment. We are bound here, as christians, to set an example that shall descend through every part of the Union. It can be done, and we trust it will be.

ITEMS.—We perceive by the papers that Mr. Mason, of Boston has been chosen professor of music in the Theological Seminary at Andover. This is all we know relative to the subject. The appointment, however, is a judicious one, and we presume it will be accepted.

The musical professor at Oberlin Institute has been called into another field of effort; and the professorship at the present time is left vacant. We hope it will soon be filled.

Chevalier Neucomm, we understand, has relinquished the idea of visiting this country in compliance with an invitation from the Boston Musical academy. Report says, that one of the Academy's professors is about to visit Europe.

The impression lately made upon our citizens by Mr. Russel, as a vocalist, who resides in Rochester, was of the most favorable kind. We regret that we had not the happiness of hearing him. His manner is stated as having been remarkable at once for chaste simplicity and vivid expression,—things not often combined.

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#### BOSTON ACADEMY'S COLLECTION of Anthems, Chouses, &c. &c.

A work of this description has recently made its appearance, which does credit to the institution under whose patronage it has been undertaken. It is what its title imports, full of good old pieces, and some new ones got up in good style.